

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received JAN 23 1986

date entered MAR 5 1986

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

**1. Name**

historic CASA FERNANDO LUIS TORO

and/or common CASA CHAVIER

**2. Location**

street & number Calle Obispado No. 3, La Alhambra \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Ponce \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of

state Puerto Rico code PR county Ponce code 0115

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NONE	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Mr. and Mrs. Jorge Chavier

street & number Calle Obispado No. 3, La Alhambra

city, town Ponce \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Puerto Rico 00733

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registro de la Propiedad, Depto. de Justicia (1st Section  
(Recorder's Office)

street & number Box 1988

city, town Ponce \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Puerto Rico 00733

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys** NONE

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes  no

date N/A \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state

# 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

## Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Constructed of reinforced concrete, the Toro residence was designed and built in 1927 for Mr. Fernando Luis Toro by Arch. Francisco Porrata Doria, a locally prominent designer. The residence is one of three properties, with connecting patios, belonging to three brothers. The "U" shaped floor plan exhibits a perpendicular extension towards the East. Most important to the spatial distribution is the centrally located living room. Off this main space, six composite doors with arched transoms of stained glass lead into adjacent interior corridors on both sides. Two doors lead to the balcony. On the North side of this space, is the most ornamented doorway of Georgian decoration which is flanked by a set of doric pilasters crowned by a cornice. The hung ceiling of the living room is detailed in a pentagonal pattern of thin wooden slats. The North doorway leads into the enclosed terrace whose back wall is angled in four sections. At the intersection of these angles, there is a set of double columns. Colored glass provides the space with difused light. A high-glazed ceramic tile wainscot of elaborate patterns contains the inscription in Arabic: "God is Allah and Mohammed his only prophet."

On the South end of the West wing is the formal dining room. The main ornaments of this space are a pair of twin windows with arched transoms of stained glass and four deep ceiling wood beams with ornate brackets supporting them at each end. The remainder of the West wing houses the service and semi-public areas of the house such as: the pantry, a break-fast room, the kitchen, a service patio and the maid's quarters (presently an office). The East extension of the plan contains three bedrooms, two bathrooms a drawing room and an office space with a private entrance.

Even though most of the house has wooden flooring, the dining room and enclosed terrace have extraordinary mosaic floors. The kitchen, service corridor and pantry have multi-colored cement tile of varying patterns.

The exterior, although sober, is elegant. Cast-in-place, bas-releif flower motifs are found on the dining room area exterior facade and general cornice line. Red, curved clay tiles cover the "L" shaped balcony and provide the white facade with color. Ten sets of double columns with a shared capital are located on the "maenianum" style balcony railing and act as supports for the balcony roof. Geometrical-shaped head moldings surround all exterior doors and windows for decorative purposes as well as partial weather protection.

To the East of the main house there is a formal garden with a fountain located at its center. Four large classical urns provide focal points at diagonal locations to the fountain, and paved, patterned walkways provide varied pedestrian connections between the spaces. Other structures on the site are a coach house or garage, recently turned into an apartment, a cistern tower and a storage hut.

The house was sold by its original owners in the early 1970's to Mr. Jorge Chavier and his wife Ms. Hilda de Lis who still live here.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1927 **Builder/Architect** Arch. Francisco Porrata Doria

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Toro residence is located in an elegant residential area of Ponce called La Alhambra. This was the first large, upper class suburban expansion developed in Puerto Rico in the early 1900's. Much in the style of Coral Gables and West Palm Beach in Florida, residences were sited on unusually large lots which allowed for elaborate and formal landscaping.

The combination of eclectic architectural elements displayed in this house make it one of the better examples of the designs of the locally well-known architect, Francisco Porrata Doria. His distinct style was based on the integration of diverse architectural influences such as: Victorian, Georgian, Neo-classic, academic Beaux Arts, Spanish Revival and Catalonian Modernism (from Cataluña, Spain; area of Barcelona). Arch. Porrata Doria is responsible for the design of some of the most important buildings in Ponce, of which the Fox Delicias Theatre and the Banco de Ponce facing the town square, are among his best projects.

Significant representations of early 20th century design concepts implemented in Ponce architecture are the Toro residence's "L" shaped balcony, the use of tile, mosaic, stained glass and the emphasis placed on the dining room within the organizing scheme.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Benítez, Marimar. "El Colegio de Arquitectos, Ahora en Ponce". Periódico El Reportero Sección Viva, 20 de julio, 1985.  
Interview with Mrs. Gloria Pila Vda. Porrata Doria (widow of architect of the house) June 24, 1985. Provided us with copy of preliminary blue prints of house

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 23,450 sq. ft. or .53833 acres

Quadrangle name USGS Ponce 1970

Quadrangle scale 1: 20,000

UTM References LAMBERT: 18°1'11" 19/753430/1993825  
66°36'23"

A 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

B 

Zone	Easting			Northing							

C 

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D 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET (SITE PLAN)

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Arch. Beatriz del Cueto Pantel

organization Colegio de Arquitectos de P. R. date December, 1985

street & number Box 2299

telephone (809) 724-1213

city or town Hato Rey

state Puerto Rico 00919

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Arch. Mariano G. Coronas Castro

title STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER

date December 27, 1985

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Keeper of the National Register

date 12/5/86

Attest:

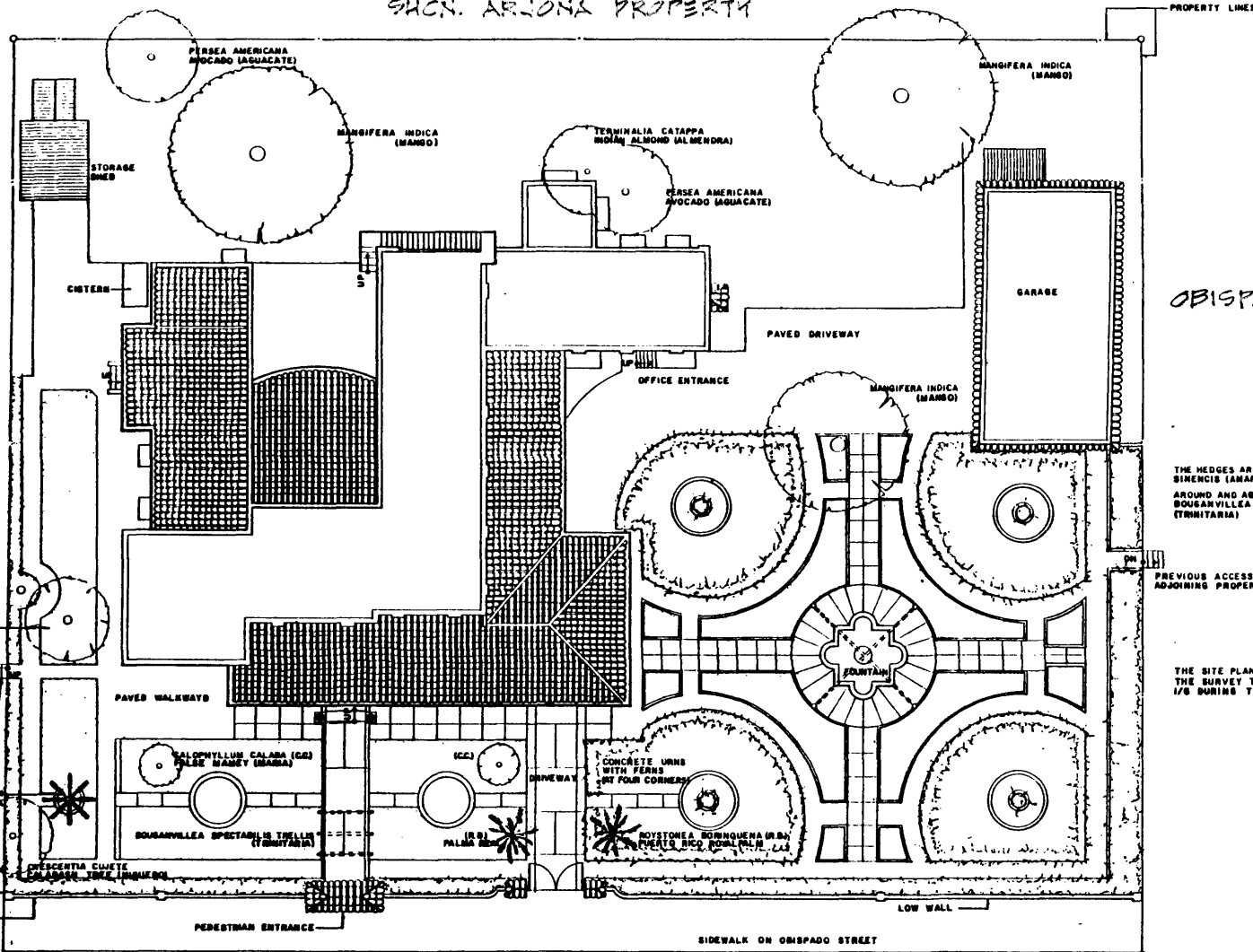
date

Chief of Registration

SUCN. ARJONA PROPERTY

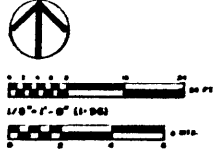
OBISPADO ST. #1

OBISPADO ST. #5



OBISPADO ST.

SITE PLAN



DRAWN BY: CLAY J. TOMPES, INES  
 CHECKED BY: JAMES W. BERRY, INES  
 RECORDING PROJECT FOR THE CITY OF PONCE  
 DRAWING NUMBER: 1985  
 DATE: 1/15/88  
 PROJECT NO. 1985-001  
 MUNICIPALITY OF PONCE  
 CALLE OBISPADO 3  
 CASA FERNANDO LUIS TORO (1927)  
 PUEBLO RICO  
 HISTORIC AMERICAN ARCHITECTURE  
 NUMBER 2 OF 6 SHEETS